

Statement of Rep. Henry A. Waxman
Roundtable on Corporations Taking Action to Address Climate Change
Bicameral Task Force on Climate Change

April 10, 2014

Together with Senator Whitehouse, I want to thank the panelists for coming here this morning to discuss how forward-thinking businesses are helping lead on climate change.

I've been working to address climate change for many years, and the private sector has always been central to these efforts.

When I put together my climate bill in 2009, we had strong support from American businesses.

Many people don't realize that we had electric utilities, chemical companies, venture capital, manufacturers, consumer goods, real estate – even oil companies – all pushing for a price on carbon. Companies supported the Waxman-Markey bill because it provided investment certainty and opened up new opportunities for businesses to thrive in an efficient, clean energy economy.

Partisanship derailed our effort in 2009. Our job now is to rebuild a diverse coalition for a renewed effort. That's why your participation today is so important.

There's no debate on the science. The most recent report from the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change makes clear that climate change is happening, is caused by humans, and will impact all regions and all countries. This includes all companies too.

Leading companies, such as the ones here today, accept scientific reality and are finding ways to reduce carbon pollution and grow their businesses at the same time.

Your companies are important in the struggle to address climate change. You know that ignoring climate change won't make the problem go away.

But you also know that taking action on climate change is a business opportunity, not an economic liability.

The United States should be doing more to seize these opportunities and to support the innovative companies that are building a stronger, cleaner economy for the 21st century.

I look forward to hearing more about your efforts today to address climate change and discussing ways to leverage your commitments to build momentum for greater action.